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SUBJECT Training Program of the AAA School
in Plavecky Podhradie.

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TRAINING PROGRAM OF AAA SCHOOL IN PLAVECKY PODHRADIE (4829N-1716E)

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1. 50X1 [redacted], a company-sized unit,
50X1 in the AAA school in PLAVECKY PODHRADIE [redacted]

[redacted] was the only company enrolled in the school at the time. It had four platoons.

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2. Five weeks of the course were spent in studies in the school area, while the other three weeks were spent on the range. Classes in the school area were held from 0700 to 1130 and from 1400 to 1700 daily except Saturday and Sunday. Hours on the range were irregular, but frequently firing lasted until 2000 or 2100.

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[redacted] following breakdown of the course.

3. The first three weeks were spent in marksmanship training. Most of the first week's work dealt with gun positions, although preliminary nomenclature of various AAA weapons the men were to fire was also studied. The AAA weapons used were the 20-mm M38 and the MG 151, both German-made, and the 7.92-mm M81 MG and the M37 Hv MG.* The barrels of the 20-mm guns could be interchanged with 15-mm barrels. The M81 was a German weapon that had been removed from airplanes for target AAA practice. The M37 was a Czech model.

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5. The second week was spent outside of the classroom. Men practiced aiming the above-mentioned weapons. They then fired wooden shells at C-2 Arado planes that flew above the area. The shells were harmless practice rounds; they disintegrated about 20 meters from the weapons' muzzles. Purpose of this training was to acquaint the troops with the weapons' behavior and to get them accustomed to traversing, elevating and firing them. This practice was held in the school area. Source did not know how many practice weapons were there.

6. Nomenclature, disassembly and assembly of the weapons was studied in the third week. Four hours of political training were also included.

* MG 151 and M81 MG as described on pages 221 and 252 of the "Catalogue of Enemy Ordnance Material," Vol 1, German. M 38 as described on pages 9-11 of the "Illustrated Record of German Army Equipment - 1939-45," Vol II, Artillery Part II, MI 10, The War Office, 1948.

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7. The fourth and fifth weeks were devoted to the firing range. The students fired weapons daily, Monday through Friday. They had Saturday and Sunday off. The range was located about five kilometers from the school. Men were taken there and brought back each day by truck. Only "live" ammunition was fired during this phase. Sleeve targets were towed by C-2 airplanes.

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No individual score was tallied, although an observer estimated whether or not a particular burst of fire was accurate. The targets were examined later by instructors to see just how well the group did collectively.

8. EM fired four types of AAA guns. The M37 was fired individually, but the others were combined as twin (dvojcata), triple (trojcata), and quadruple (ctvrkata) mounts. There were four twin-mounted M8ls, four triple-mounted MG 15ls, and three quad-mounted M38s. There was only one M37 on the range.

9. Metallic link belts and magazines were used to hold the ammunition. [redacted] belts were used for the

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twin-mounted M8ls and the triple-mounted MG 15ls. [redacted] the M8l belt contained several thousand rounds, while the MG 15l belt had 540 rounds. The metal magazines, he claimed, held either 10 or 20 rounds. [redacted] the ammunition was of Czech manufacture and recalled only a "48" stamped on the end of the shells.

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10. Firing practice lasted all day. The hours varied due to unexpected occurrences, such as a sleeve being shot from a plane or a weapon jamming. However, every man fired each of the weapon combinations at least once per day. [redacted]

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[redacted] rounds were fired per man. [redacted] the number was very small.

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[redacted] 10,000 rounds were allocated for range fire.

11. The men worked in crews of six. Three men were on the firing line, while the other three observed them practice. The trio exchanged places during the sessions of firing. One man fired the weapon and controlled the traversing and elevating mechanisms, while the other two fed ammunition into the gun. [redacted] the weapons could be elevated from 0 to 90 degrees in three seconds by the firer.

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[redacted] the firer could traverse from one side to the other in three seconds.

12. It usually took a six-man crew 20 minutes to complete its firing. That is, every member fired within this period of time. Firing consisted of short bursts, and only a few rounds were fired off by each man. Stress was particularly placed upon the firing of the M38s and MG 15ls.

13. [redacted] the maximum effective range of the weapons used was between 1200 and 1800 meters. [redacted] their range could be as high as 4000 meters, but added that beyond 1800 meters the fire was not accurate.

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50X1 [redacted] weapon barrels [redacted] became very hot after 500 rounds of continuous fire. Barrels were replaced in a matter of seconds when necessary.

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14. Their range work was interrupted three times during these two weeks due to fires started by artillery shells in nearby woods. The students went out into the area to put out the blazes.

15. The sixth and seventh weeks included: return to the classroom, theory, aiming, nomenclature, disassembly and assembly of the AAA guns, political training, and about 20 hours of plane identification.

16. The eighth and final week was spent on a firing range, this time about 10 km from the school. Even though it was the final exercise, they fired wooden dummy rounds. An observer kept an estimated record of each man's firing success. Besides the final firing test, EM had to dig their own bunkers, pitch tents, dig in the guns that were hauled in by unidentified foreign trucks and camouflage the area.

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50X1 [redacted] this final week called for duties that would be required of all AAA personnel during actual combat.

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